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**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Please amend Claim 3 as follows. Deletions are ~~struck-through~~. Please add Claims 4-12.

1 (original): A hair iron of V-shaped, hair-sandwiching type, comprising a pair of openable/closable hair-sandwiching arms that store, in void spaces each shielded by a pair of right and left shielding members constituting each hair-sandwiching arm, temperature-adjustable heat-source plates and heating plates that contact the respective heat-source plates and sandwich hairs when the arms are closed,

wherein the hair-sandwiching arms are openably/closably connected on one end by a pivot so that the force of a spring provided at a pivot bearing maintains the pair of openable/closable arms in open directions in a normal condition, and the heating plates are affixed in a manner facing each other;

said hair iron characterized in that tapered portions are provided in a base, on the void space side, of each heating plate and a gasket is fitted in gaps formed by the tapered portions in order to improve steam cutoff property of the void space and also facilitate disassembly and assembly.

2 (original): The hair iron claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that a gasket is placed in a connection area between one void space shielded by the shielding member of the hair-sandwiching arm in which the heat-source plate and the heating plate are stored, and the other void space shielded by the shielding member of the hair-sandwiching arm, in order to improve the steam cutoff property of both sides of the void space.

3 (currently amended): The hair iron claimed in Claim 1-~~or 2~~, characterized in that a temperature controller and/or a temperature display is placed in one void space in which the heat-source plate and the heating plate are stored, or in the other void space.

4 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 2, characterized in that a temperature controller and/or a temperature display is placed in one void space in which the heat-source plate and the heating plate are stored, or in the other void space.

5 (new): A hair iron of V-shaped, hair-sandwiching type, comprising a pair of hair-sandwiching arms which are pivoted and openably/closably connected to each other, each hair-sandwiching arm comprising:

a temperature-adjustable heat-source plate and a heating plate which receives heat from the heat-source plate, said heating plate facing another heating plate of the other hair-sandwiching arm, thereby sandwiching hairs when the hair-sandwiching arms are closed;

a pair of right and left shielding members with respect to a longitudinal axis of the hair-sandwiching arm, said right and left shielding members having respective inner peripheries attached to each other and respective outer peripheries connected to right and left connecting portions of the heating plate, thereby forming a void space enclosed by the right and left shielding members and the heating plate, wherein the heat-source plate is placed inside the void space; and

gaskets fitted between the right shielding member and the right connecting portion of the heating plate and between the left shielding member and the left connecting portion of the heating plate, respectively, for improving steam cutoff property of the void space.

6 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 5, wherein each connecting portion of the heating plate has a groove in which the outer periphery of the hair-sandwiching arm is fitted together with the gasket.

7 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 6, wherein the groove has a surface tapered in a direction of placing force toward the gasket when the outer periphery of the hair-sandwiching arm is connected to the groove.

8 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 7, wherein the outer periphery of the hair-sandwiching arm has a tapered surface conforming to the tapered surface of the groove.

9 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 5, further comprising a biasing member provided at a pivot where the right and left hair-sandwiching arms are pivoted, said biasing member urging the right and left hair-sandwiching arms to open.

10 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 5, further comprising a center gasket placed between the inner peripheries of the hair-sandwiching arm.

11 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 5, further comprising a temperature display placed on the right and left shielding members of one of the hair-sandwiching arms opposite to the heating plate.

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12 (new): The hair iron claimed in Claim 5, further comprising a temperature controller provided in one of the hair-sandwiching arms.